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main social function as a caste was to make war, more often offensive than defensive. Consequently military courage (*ubutwari*) was highly praised. There are numerous and interminable poems made by official bards, telling stories of battle and commemorating military prowess. The young Batutsi, during their training, were taught to compose such poems and even to invent imaginary doughty deeds. Special signs, or badges of honour, were granted to those who had killed seven or fourteen enemies during an expedition; there was a special ceremony to honour warriors who had killed twenty-one persons in a campaign. Some informants were still able to give the names of warriors who had received these marks of honour.

It is worthwhile to note, however, that even in a society so focused on military values, great warriors could gain an extreme popularity but not, at least directly, social power. Martial valour as such was not even considered a special qualification for becoming commander of the army (*mutware w' ingabo*). During battles, indeed, the chief of the army had to stay motionless in his headquarters. He was magically identified with his army: he could not move backwards without endangering the advance of the army. This type of command did not require much courage. An army commander was, on the other hand, very high in the power scale. Members of the army had to give him cattle on certain occasions (when he was taking up his duties, when he was reviewing the herds of the army members); the king granted him cattle in some circumstances, for instance, after a battle had been won, or he entrusted to the army the care of some herds. By these means the army chief had control of many beasts: he could then increase his clientship, and thus his social power, by gifts of cattle.

A Mututsi also greatly desires to be regarded as having *ubugabo*. This means the quality of being a man (*mugabo*); it includes trustworthiness in keeping promises, generosity in treating one's friends well, liberality towards the poor, moral courage in accepting one's responsibilities. In a society where relations of inferiority and superiority are predominantly personal, in the sense that authority is rarely abstract (a law, a principle) but generally identified with a person (chief, king, lord, &c.), emphasis is laid on fidelity in any personal relationship.

Another quality that the Batutsi are extremely proud to have is *itonde*. This may be translated as 'self-mastery'. To lose one's temper, to manifest violent emotion by crying is really shameful. Anger, in particular, should not be violently expressed. The demeanour of a Mututsi should always be dignified, polite, amiable, if a little supercilious. Batutsi manners have often been called hypocritical. This would be true if such behaviour were displayed in an extrovert culture where it is considered unethical not to express to a person exactly what one thinks about him. But in Ruanda it is taken for granted that only vulgar persons reveal all their attitudes and emotions. This is understandable in a strongly hierarchical society, where the authority of a superior is not restricted to certain specific domains of the life of his inferior, and where to express any disagreement with the superior

614 825 with their totems or even with other animals, to render them harmless or to excite them against their enemies.

This, however, is a belief that will soon disappear, for the Banyarwanda take small notice of their totems nowadays.

538 As far as oral literature and folklore in general are concerned, one may assert without risk of error that the Banyarwanda have no reason to envy the neighboring peoples.

There may be few Black groups who managed to preserve so many and such ancient traditions, made all the more precious by the fact that they help us understand more than one facet of their history. This will be shown readily /61/ in the course of this work. We believe that the Hamites, who are given to the things of the mind and have organized the country methodically, must be justly regarded as the chief authors of this literary development.

181 The Bahutu of Ruanda owe to these same Batutsi the appreciable advantage of being less backward, less "primitive" than many of their fellow Bantu of Central Africa. Because they were less isolated than most of the members of the tiny neighboring states at the time of European penetration, the Banyawanda found themselves in a situation more favorable to the progress of civilization thanks to the centralization of the Hamitic state.

171 The inhabitants of Ruanda, as we have just pointed out, have more than one trait in common with the other African tribes. In speaking on the subject, Maurice Delafosse provides the following explanation, "The African Negro peoples, as different from one another as they may seem to a superficial observer, have a unified character which may be attributed to their common ethnic origins and to the relative similarity of the physical, economic, and social environments where they first developed and where they later evolved." (1)

1. Les Civilisations négro-africaines /Negro African Civilizations/.

157 As for the reader who wishes to know what to think of the Blacks, we must answer in all sincerity that it is very difficult to

644 One sees standing about what seem to be huge baskets covered
[343] with thatch roofs. They are granaries where the food of the employees is kept. The storeroom is the king's favorite spot. He takes pleasure in hoarding there the most disparate objects: fabrics, crockery, furniture, and trinkets of all sorts. It is said that it gives him infinite
[157] pleasure to survey his "bazaar" and to handle the goods piece by piece, away from all prying eyes.

It is easy to imagine the life and bustle that prevail at court and in the capital.

The entire nation dwells in the person of the king. He alone represents it. Since the State is identified with the king, he alone is eternally mentioned. "Everything is done for his sake. Justice is the king's justice, troops are the king's army, the nobility fights for him.... The monarch is absolute master and naturally has full and complete command over the property owned by his subjects, and when he takes it he is only taking what belongs to him.... Whoever is born a subject must obey without question...."

This short account of the history of Louis XIV's reign fittingly describes the rights exercised by the Hamitic kings of Ruanda. As a result of this concept and attitude on the part of the Blacks, nearly all the clans or family groups which make up the population of Ruanda have a role to fulfill at court, not so much for the welfare of the realm as for the pleasure of the king. The functions they must exercise are many and vary with the nature of the people involved and the products of the soil on which they live. Some of the posts derive from historical circumstances. Among these offices, some are regarded as an honor and privilege and others as a chore. Some offices are also assigned as punishment or /352/ revenge for misdeeds which were committed in the past by ancestors and the very memory of which has been lost. Most of those posts amount to actual bondage for their holders.

Positions of a mere utilitarian nature are by far the most numerous.

644 It is surprising to hear that literary pleasures and entertainments
●538 are included in the court program and even stand in a separate category. By the sovereign's side, indeed, there stand official historians and

644 appointed bards (abachurabgenge), as well as literary jousters or men
538 of choice language called Abasizi, whose only role is to refresh the king's memory or to beguile his leisure with tasteful improvisations. Even the commoners are not insensitive to literature. There is not a single Munyarwanda /Banyarwanda/ who is not keenly interested in the legends, narratives, fables, moral or humorous tales, riddles, plays on words, jokes, etc., belonging to the oral literature.

644 Every post at the capital has its own traditions which must be scrupulously observed. We shall attempt to provide a short description of the duties and regulations connected with those offices, and of the practices and formalities to which the king must submit on the one hand and his subjects on the other.

The reader should not be surprised to hear that there is etiquette and ceremonial at court.

It is easy to imagine the oddity of a circle such as that of the court, where such varied figures rub shoulders within such a relatively small space: lords, courtiers, disciples of Aesculapius and vulgar charlatans, servants, sorcerers and diviners of various sorts, caterers, stewards, dancers, pages, keepers of the traditions, official chroniclers, literary men, etc., to list but a few. /353/ This whole world exists, thinks, and acts for the sake of the king alone. It is a true medieval court with, moreover, pagan mores where the element of sorcery predominates.

128 Laymen unfamiliar with Africa will be able to form an idea of what a king and his court represent in a Black land. What we shall say of the former political situation, the royal mores that prevailed, the human tributes and bloody bondage, will not only describe the
[643] ancient times but also demonstrate the respect that surrounded the person of the king, who was regarded by his subjects as a demigod. When viewed in the past, his bloody whims, far from being injurious to his reputation, only served to strengthen his power and his majesty. Primitive souls are awed by displays of brute force.

Among other interesting details, one will find in these pages the more or less rational origin, derived from legend or history, of many a practice and custom that still exists today.

754 just like the monstra, portenta, and other ill omens of Roman times.

In order to check an enemy invasion, the Banyarwanda formerly had the habit of leaving those abnormal beings to the blows of the invaders. The shedding of this blood, or even the mere presence of such individuals, was regarded as a curse.

It would be impossible to enumerate all the various methods of bewitchment and spell casting. The imagination of the Blacks is disproportionately fertile in this respect. The wealth of methods will [538] be /405/ appreciated when we recount the famous "Banyoro Invasion" tale, which has now become a traditional epic poem. Numerous incantations and much sorcery are mentioned in this narrative, and the eventual defeat of the invaders is ascribed to them.

754 842 10. Aglet knotters. It is rather surprising to find that the Blacks, too, believe in the evil influence of people to whom this kind of misdeed is ascribed.

Activities of this sort are called in the native language kumanikir' undi ngw'atabyara, "to tie up or check fecundity," or again, kubang' ingata, "to braid a grass pad."

As the etymological meaning of these words indicates, the grass knotters attempt to procure from the household of the people they wish to injure a handful of grass of the kind (ishinge) which is strewn upon the floor of the hut.

With it they braid a sort of pad (ingata), which is then hidden and hung in the hut.

So long as the grass remains knotted (in the pad), the mistress of the household cannot hope to become a mother.

Many young women ascribe their sterility to this /form of/ sorcery.

[826] A handful of hair taken from a neighboring woman and braided in the shape of a crown will have the same result. This is called kumuzingirahw'amasunzu, "to coil someone's hair."

The natives claim that it would also suffice for the ill-disposed to get hold of one of the vegetable-fiber rings which ladies or women of rank wear on their legs, and crumple it in their hands, for the unfortunate woman to become sterile or to die in childbirth.

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"Her father said, 'My child, what you have done is bad.

"'Evil will come unto us.'

"The carnivore knocked on the door for the second time.

"He entered the hut and hid near the rush wall (that divides the inside of the hut in two compartments).

"The woman got up to take a brand from the fire.

"The leopard leaped upon her and took her outside.

"With his claws he tore out her entrails (imushing' urwara munda, hava mw' umwana).

"The father got up to go to her aid.

"The animal had dragged his quivering prey into the banana grove.

"The husband, after a search, found nothing but a few blood-stained copper bracelets.

"After a period of time the feline returned. /451/

"The master of the house was not caught napping.

"His mind had been active since the accident.

"It was in vain that the leopard brought along Jack Rabbit (the prototype of the resourceful rogue who has a thousand tricks up his sleeve).

"He came near the hut.

"Nziguye ('I know how to handle difficulties') (1) had dug a

1. Nziguye is the substantive of the verb kwizigura, which means "to get out of trouble," "to escape danger through one's own resources."

deep ditch (covered with light branches).

"The leopard vanished into the trap and died there."

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d. Aside from the bards and official chroniclers already mentioned, there are also at court some literary jousters who speak a refined language, who are appointed to the king's side, and who attend to him in shifts.

They are called Abasizi, from the word gusiga, which means "to speak a refined language." They expound the events of the day

538 in an amusing and literary form which is not understood by those who
195 are not in the know.

This is why the opposite of the verb gusĭgă is gusigura, which means "to explain." These men have great verbal facility and are always ready to improvise. The king takes pleasure in those literary jousts, which are not lacking in charm. Their language, which is very rich, lends itself readily to those witticisms which the Abasĭzĭ have built up into a vocation and livelihood. Their recruitment is usually entrusted to a great chief. The present incumbents of this office belong, on the one hand, to the Basinga and aBene Katambi clans, and, on the other hand, to the Bakōbga (Nyaruguru, near the Bisi Mountains).

538 Like the official chroniclers, they remain at the sovereign's disposal, ready to beguile his leisure and to make him enjoy literary pleasures.

539 /452/ In order to give an idea of their style and of their talent, we transcribe here three small pieces of their own making, chosen from among the simplest and easiest.

First Example

Agasĭgo ka Rumanur' imbāba.	A small literary piece about that (famine) which caused bits and pieces of hoes to come out (of their hiding places to buy food with them).
Ibyo bitag' imitsima.	What used to be called bread (to wit, the roots of banana trees).
Mitsindo yarabitsinze.	The Victorious (king) has delivered us from it (forever).
Intoke ziraruhutse.	The banana trees may (now) rest.
Ibyo twaryaga.	What we (formerly) ate.
Ngaho wabay' umutsima.	That it has now become (true) bread.
Mitsindo yarabitsinze.	The Victorious (king) has delivered us (from these evils).

539 Umurir' ugatiny' amazi. Fire fears water.
Amaz (i)' atiny' ifu. Water fears flour. (3)

3. "Water fears flour," that is to say, the bread or "mush" into which it vanishes.

If' itiny' amenyo. Flour fears teeth (4).

4. "Flour fears the teeth" of those who eat it.

Ameny' atiny' umuhoro. Teeth fear the billhook (iron) (5).

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5. "Teeth fear the billhook," as all other hard bodies, especially when made of iron, like the billhook, which is one of the most useful tools.

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The Blacks of Ruanda have a rich and varied oral literature. They like witticisms, and since their language is rich in shades and nuances, they manipulate it with great art.

195 The most refined speech is heard at the capital.

644 The habitual frequenters of the court, lords, courtiers, and employees, express themselves in flawless language, use the right words and choice expressions, and give them the proper inflections, for Runyarwanda is a phonetic /sic/ language. The appointed men of letters, storytellers, bards, genealogists, and historians carefully watch their diction. Among them conversation is never /454/ dull, for jokes and witticisms abound.

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Considering the good taste that distinguishes the familiars of the king and the inhabitants of the central province of Nduga, it is not

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of coercion at their disposal. If a mwami attempted to go beyond his effective power even without exceeding the limits of his divine rights, he exposed himself to the chance of meeting some obstacles. Nevertheless, he had sovereign as well as divine rights and his subjects were constantly reminded of these by the tributes they had to pay.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE MILITARY STRUCTURE

Every Ruanda, Twa, Hutu as well as Tutsi, was affiliated to an army (*ingabo*). This is stated by ninety-nine per cent. of our informants. Although this military organization is obsolete at the present day—indeed it no longer exists—ninety-eight per cent. of the Tutsi interviewed can still give the name of the army of their paternal ascendants.

There were several armies. The name of each one had a military meaning. It was a challenge, a boast, the memory of a dynastic or historical event: for instance 'the tough ones' (*abashakamba*), 'the first to be praised' (*imbanzamihigo*), 'the fearless ones' (*inzirabwoba*), &c. At the beginning of each reign a new army was organized by the king. Moreover, a very important chief could be authorized by the mwami to raise an army.

(*a*) *Recruitment*

An army was recruited in the following way. The mwami asked his Tutsi clients to bring to the court their sons who had not yet had any military training. When about 150 to 200 young men were gathered, they constituted what we may call a company (*itorero*). During the reign, four or five companies were recruited in the same way and were added to the first one. According to ninety-six per cent. of our informants a man had to stay all his life in the company he had first entered. The young men (*intore*, the chosen ones) lived at the court of the king or of the chief who had been allowed to recruit an army. Under the direction of an officer called the chief of the king's residence (*umutware w'urugo rw'umwami*) or of its counterpart at a chief's court, they were trained for several years in military skills such as bow and arrow shooting, the use of the sword, spear, and javelin. They learned warlike dances, and to memorize and to recite the poems in which the high deeds of extraordinary bravery and boldness of the past warriors were exalted.[38] They were also taught how to compose poems in imitation of these great models.

[38] See Kagame, 1949b; 1951.

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being regarded as insulting, disrespect or revolt, the only way out for the inferior is to appear to behave always as expected: to fall in with any desire of his superior while concealing his own opinion, never to say no to any order but to find clever excuses for not doing it. Consequently dissimulation is very highly thought of and a skill necessary to master for someone wanting to live more or less securely under such a political régime.

Many stories and proverbs give evidence of the frequency of covert disobedience to the rulers and of the appreciation in which an astute excuse and a 'good lie' were held. This was the only way to adapt oneself to such a situation.

Theorem Seven

It is commonly accepted in the Western tradition that truth has a high value and that language is the medium used to express 'truth', that is to say, 'what reality appears to be to the person who speaks'. Undoubtedly, in Western practice, language is used, even in the cognitive sphere, for many other purposes than to express what the speaker thinks. Moreover, most of the scholars who, in recent years, have studied the problem of the origin and function of language, bring qualifications to the traditional view. In the almost unanimous opinion of the carriers of Western culture, however, the ideal verbal behaviour must express 'truth' and not what is useful to the speaker. This is, for example, what is inculcated into children in schools.

In a society in which human relations are imbued with some cultural premises as the one being considered in this chapter, 'truth' cannot be recognized as a dominant value. Indeed, one is supposed to use language not to say what is thought to conform to reality but what is thought to conform to the ruler's opinion. Nobody, the ruler included, entertains many illusions on the sincerity of what is said, but submission has been expressed at the right time and this is felt to be most important.

This theorem could be formulated in this way: the verbal behaviour towards a superior must express dependence rather than 'truth'.

Theorem Eight

Once it is taken for granted that in hierarchical relations, behaviour must conform to the superior's expectations even to the

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593 her husband and to have a good life with him only if she is liked
776 by *Imana*.

The dowry represents wealth for the father. The average Tutsi
564 expects to receive a cow for his daughter, an average Hutu eight
583 hoes. However, today the Hutu often and the Tutsi sometimes pay
[556] the dowry in cash. For the husband, the dowry purchases the
[178] children produced by the woman during the term of their marriage. For the young woman, the dowry is a measure of her social value. She has discussed with other girls how much a man will have to give for her. Young Tutsikazi flatter each other by saying that they are certainly worth four cows—the dowry of a Tutsikazi of a very good patrilineage. A Hutukazi may boast of the 2,500 Congo francs (50 dollars) that were given for her, for everyone knows that 1,500 Congo francs (30 dollars) is the average for a Hutukazi. Or, a poor woman who is slightly mad is overcome by shame, for everyone knows that her father has given her in marriage without demanding a dowry. The more one has given for a young woman,
[554] the higher her social status. The wife of a wealthy man will have
[556] more clothes and less work, more respect and less hardship, than the wife of a poor man.

562 Although a young woman looks forward to marriage to rise
585 above her painfully low status as a female child, she knows very well that what lies before her is a lifetime of work and that she will for a long time be under the authority of others. She is in effect sent from her father's household, where she works for her mother, to her husband's household, where she works for her husband and her mother-in-law. Regarding the sentiments of the husband towards his wife, or of men in general towards women, it is enough
● [538] to mention that in the rich oral literature of Burundi, there is not one poem or song of love. At best, among the *amazina*—praise-
[533] poems, most of which praise the king or a generous patron or the man himself as a warrior—there are several which praise a good wife. She is praised for her cleverness, for her indefatigable efforts on behalf of her husband, for the cleanness of the butter she churns, and she may be given the compliment of comparison with a cow. In all truth, a man may sometimes have a great love, or be infatuated
[152] with his wife or his mistress. He does not talk about it very much; he would certainly not talk about it with strangers. At all events, love is not relevant to married life except in the general form it takes as the basis of the exchange of gifts and services between superiors and inferiors.

591 Every married woman of every class and caste works for her
[593] husband. Often a bride goes to live in the same household with her